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TRAI

AMID CHAOS, TRAI SUSPENDS ANTI-SPAM RULES FOR 1 WEEK

The decision follows disruptions in banking, credit card payment and other transactions that involve SMS and OTP generation

NEW NORMS USE BLOCKCHAIN TECHNOLOGY

The disruption happened after telcos implemented the new norms for commercial messages, which came into effect on Monday. The rules aim to curb unsolicited and fraudulent messages. SMSes and OTPs, when sent by banks and payment companies, are checked against the templates registered on the blockchain platform — a process called SMS scrubbing

TELCOS BLAME PAYMENT COMPANIES

- On Monday, banking and telcos traded charges over the SMS, OTP disruptions. Telcos blamed it on the payment companies saying they did not register their content template before the deadline
- "It has been observed that some of the principal entities have not fulfilled the requirements," Trai also said in a statement

40 crore

MESSAGES FAILED TO DELIVER ON MONDAY, ACCORDING TO MEDIA REPORTS

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VIJAYAPURAM • KOLLAM • WARANGAL • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Even I cannot tame B'luru land mafia: Minister

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

THE powers that be within the State Government and the Revenue Minister himself cannot control the land mafia that is encroaching government property in Bengaluru. Punitive action too does not work against errant and corrupt Revenue Department officials, who collude with unscrupulous real estate players, admitted Revenue Minister **R Ashoka** on the floor of the Assembly on Tuesday.

"We suspend officials for allowing a builder to construct buildings on government land. But they are back in the department in no time," he said, replying to Assembly members, who pointed to many illegal layouts coming up in and around Bengaluru.

BJP MLA Goolihatti Shekar said that a layout was developed without documents at Hullimangala village near Anekal taluk and 41 sites were developed and sold. "Special deputy commissioners at the Revenue Department are more powerful than the Chief Secretary," he mocked.

JDS MLA AT Ramaswamy, who has presented a lengthy report on illegal encroachments in the city, too said that the land has been converted illegally at that spot. The government does not have any records, but the land has been converted as builders have colluded with officials, he added.

Responding, Ashoka, one of the most powerful ministers in the Yediyurappa cabinet, said that his hands are tied. "A builder has constructed a multi-storeyed apartment on a government land, which is worth ₹160 crore, at KR Puram. The company even started selling the flats. When I came to know about it, I suspended officials involved. But within four hours, they approached the Karnataka Administrative Tribunal, got a stay and were back in their chairs. I then ordered their transfer to Tumakuru. But they were back within days," he said. P7

₹100 CRORE SOUGHT TO FENCE PROPERTIES: ASHOKA

Revenue Minister R Ashoka said that he has requested Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa to allocate ₹100 crore only to fence properties cleared of encroachments.

> **When I was in the Opposition, I had raised this issue a number of times in the Assembly. But when I sit in this place as a minister, I realise that it is very difficult to tackle them (land mafia and Revenue Dept officials). They are so powerful.**
>
> R Ashoka, Revenue Minister

Banks should penalise crony lending: CEA

Says quality of lending a challenge since 90s

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

CHIEF Economic Advisor (CEA) Krishnamurthy Subramanian on Tuesday said banks must become more serious about allocating capital optimally and that senior management should be penalised for crony lending.

"Crony lending is the elephant in the room. Financial sector in India has to take responsibility that it is the ultimate arbiter of capital and ensure optimal capital allocation," the CEA said, while speaking at a Ficci event.

K Subramanian, CEA

Subramanian said the quality of lending has remained a key challenge for the banks since the early 1990s, especially when it came to large loans in the infrastructure sector and advised banks to give loan on creditworthiness of the company.

"Banks need to ensure that capital allocation to the infrastructure sector is to creditworthy borrowers. The Economic Survey also highlighted that the banking sector's problems originated from large loans that were not necessarily lent to the most creditworthy borrowers. This problem gets accentuated in the context of infrastructure," he said.

Subramanian also suggested that the compensation of senior management in banks must be linked to the quality of credit, and there should be a claw-back provision in instances of ever-greening of loans or zombie lending.

"The board of directors cannot be asleep at the wheel," he said, adding that auditors are the first line of defence on this.

"Auditors cannot say this is something they cannot do. Data analytics can do. Zombie lending and evergreening should be avoided as they lead to suboptimal capital allocation," he said.

Subramanian noted that the size of the financial sector remains very small compared to the size of the overall economy on any parameter.

ACB officers seen at the residence of RTO official Channaveerappa in Mandya on Tuesday | EXPRESS

9 govt officials raided by ACB

BALA CHAUHAN @Bengaluru

IN an early morning crackdown against alleged corrupt government officers, the ACB on Tuesday conducted widespread raids and searches against nine government officials at 28 places in 11 districts in Karnataka, under the Prevention of Corruption Act (PCA), said official sources.

The accused officials, searched over alleged disproportionate assets, were Krishnegowda, project director, Nirmiti Kendra, Chikkaballapura; Hanamantha Shivappa, Chikkannanavara, deputy chief electrical inspector, Belagavi Circle; Subramanya K Vaddar, joint director, Town & Country Planning, Mysuru; Munigopal Raju, superintendent engineer, CHESCOM, Mysuru; Channaveerappa, first division assistant, RTO office, Mysuru South, Lakshmipuram; Raju Pattar, account officer, GESCOM, Yadgir; Victor Simon, police inspector, Bengaluru Metropolitan Task Force; K Subramanyam, junior engineer, assistant director, Town Planning Office, BBMP, Yelahanka Zone, Bengaluru City; and K M Pratham, deputy director, Factories and Boilers, Davanagere Division, said sources.

In all, sleuths recovered 3.5 kg gold, 35 kg silver and cash worth ₹9.23 lakh during the raids.

Farmer stir: India summons UK envoy

'Press freedom intact'

Dismissing aspersions about lack of press freedom in India, the Indian mission in London said, "Foreign media in India have witnessed the events first-hand."

PUSHKAR BANAKAR @New Delhi

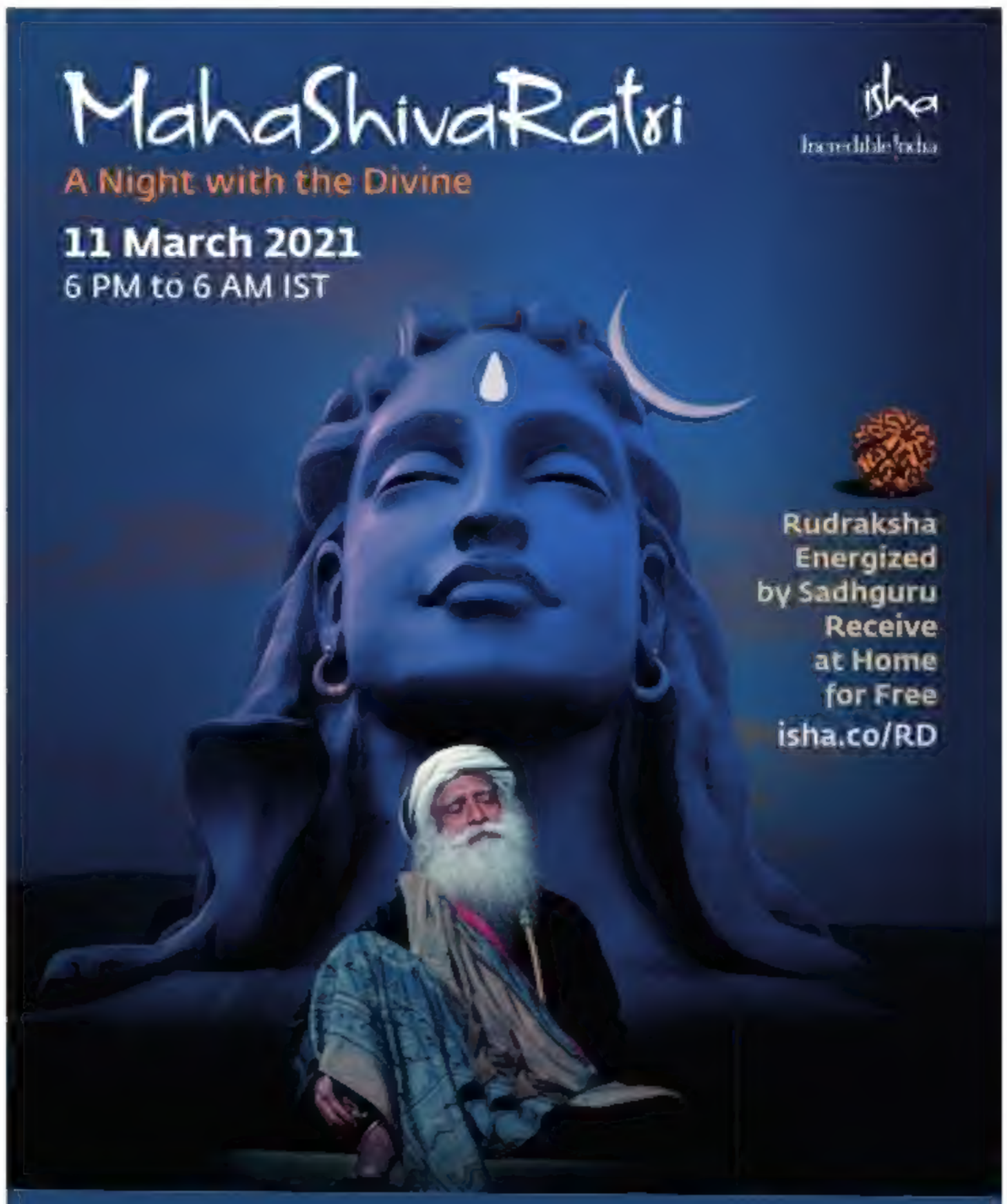
A day after the UK Parliament held a debate on the farm protests and the three farm laws, the Ministry of External Affairs summoned British High Commissioner Alex Ellis to express New Delhi's opposition to the "gross interference".

"Foreign Secretary summoned the British High Commissioner and conveyed strong opposition to the unwarranted and tendentious discussion on agricultural reforms in India in the British Parliament. Foreign Secretary made it clear that this represented a gross interference in the politics of another democratic country. He advised that British MPs should refrain from practising vote bank politics by misrepresenting events, especially in relation to another fellow democracy," a terse statement from the ministry read.

Earlier in the day, the Indian High Commission in London dismissed the debate as being based on false assertions and without substantiation of facts.

British parliamentarians held the debate on Monday in response to the e-petition initiated by Liberal Democratic Councillor Gurch Singh.

UK law mandates that any petition which garners over one lakh signatures must be debated in Parliament. According to a former diplomat, the harsh tone of British MPs indicates India's handling of the farm protests has not gone down well with them. Another diplomat said that any country can discuss any issue in their Parliaments, but it will affect India's image if a resolution is passed.



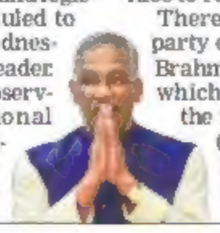
Uttarakhand CM quits, new name today

VINEET UPADHYAY @ Dehradun

AFTER four days of intense lobbying to save his chair, Uttarakhand Chief Minister **Trivendra Singh Rawat** on Tuesday tendered his resignation to Governor Baby Rani Maurya, who asked him to continue in a caretaker position for now.

Rawat is the first BJP chief minister to be replaced midstream during the Modi-Shah tenure at the helm. It's also being read as an indication to other party chief ministers to perform or perish. Had Rawat stayed on, he would have completed four years as CM.

The BJP's Uttarakhand legislature party is scheduled to meet at 10 am on Wednesday to select its new leader. The party's central observers, including national vice-president Dr Raman Singh and national general secretary Dushyant Kumar Gautam, will oversee the change of guard. Leaders like Dhan Singh Rawat, Anil Baluni, Ajay Bhatt and Surendra Bhatt are in the race to replace Rawat.



There is some buzz on the party experimenting with a Brahmin as the new CM, in which case Baluni could be the front-runner. "This is to balance the vote bank in the state," said a source. P10

Golden opportunity

Rawat, who announced his resignation at a press conference, said, "Only in the BJP, a boy who hails from a small village can become chief minister."

Cong MLAs chant Jai Shri Ram, irk ministers

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

CHANTS of Jai Shri Ram echoed in the hallowed Assembly Hall on Tuesday. But this time, quite surprisingly, it was from the opposition Congress party and not the ruling BJP.

Congress Legislature Party leader Siddaramaiah, who was speaking on increasing prices of essential commodities across the country, pointed out that even BJP Rajya Sabha member Subramanian Swamy has tweeted, "Petrol price Rs 93 in Ram's India, Rs 53 in Sita's Nepal, Rs 51 in Ravan's Lanka."

KPCC president DK Shivakumar has a word with CLP leader Siddaramaiah in Bengaluru on Tuesday | ASHISHKRISHNA HP

With this cue, Congress members started chanting Jai Shri Ram repeatedly. P4

'KNEW IT 4 MONTHS AGO'

Big leader behind CD gate, alleges Jarkiholi

BANSY KALAPPA @ Bengaluru

FORMER water resources minister Ramesh Jarkiholi, who went incommunicado after he resigned a week ago following a sleazy video allegedly showing him leaked, on Tuesday claimed that the entire episode aimed at sullying his reputation was managed by a "great leader", but refused to name him or identify the party he belongs to.

He alleged that a person staying on the fourth or fifth floor of an apartment near Orion Mall at Yeshwanthpur in Bengaluru is behind the incident. "Almost ₹100 crore has been spent. Nine people have operated out of two locations at Bannerghatta Road and Yeshwanthpur. I knew of this plot four months ago and had discussed it with my family," Jarkiholi said. P4